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Spread of mobile payments will spur innovative new applications

Premier Lai Ching-te today said that mobile payments are among the key policy measures for building Taiwan into a smart digital country as the technology can meet society's needs while sparking the creation of innovative applications for industries.

Speaking at the eighth in a series of interministerial meetings on boosting investments in Taiwan, the premier said mobile payments will play an important role in Taiwan's push to become a smart, digitally advanced country. For mobile payments to become more pervasive, the government must consider both the supply and demand sides of the process.

With regard to supply, Taiwan must set up more places to accept mobile payments such as in national forest recreation areas or health care clinics, providing added convenience for the general public and making things easier for international visitors to Taiwan, the premier said. Government agencies can also list the availability of mobile payment services as a performance indicator when evaluating procurement cases and subsidy programs.

On the demand side, the government must design initiatives to encourage mobile payments. Agencies can set aside budgets for transaction fees and provide specific incentive measures to familiarize consumers with mobile payment options. Central and local governments can also consolidate mobile pay services for the payment of utility bills, parking fees, and other public service bills, broadening collaborations with private businesses to support the mobile payment industry.

To speed up the promotion of mobile payments, the government must expand and consolidate the use of stored value cards for transportation and small-value payments. Given the essential

role that young people play in mobile payment usage, all agencies should take the initiative to promote the cards, Premier Lai said.

Additionally, as a new law allowing businesses in Taiwan to experiment with innovative technologies for financial services was passed at the end of last year, the premier instructed the Financial Supervisory Commission to actively work with the business community to promote model applications that include technology and startup enterprises.

The government should move at the same time to review and revise tax and accounting regulations as digital payment technology spreads and becomes more common, said the premier. The receipt lottery system for electronic invoices should be expanded, along with a feasibility evaluation of a full-scale shift to electronic paperless receipts.

The government's promotion of mobile payments is aimed at establishing a foundation for a more convenient environment for everyday life that also improves experiences in other areas including invoicing, taxation and public services. Premier Lai directed the responsible ministries and agencies to lead the way in bringing out new applications that will make a noticeable difference in daily life.